



Task 6 Technical Memorandum Define Project Purpose and Jurisdiction Dialog

Draft

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County Working Groups Round 1 and 2 Meeting Summaries





Introduction

This technical memorandum summarizes the results of meetings with the I-70 Coalition jurisdictions to explain the purpose of the project and to provide the framework for project activities. It also summarizes the county working group preferences for transit service levels, freight service levels, and station locations.



1.0 Project Purpose and Process

1.1 Purpose

The purpose of this I-70 Land Use Planning Study is to engage local jurisdictions along the I-70 corridor from Golden to Glenwood Springs to learn their preferences for future station locations and alignment options. The study is a collaborative effort designed to address local agency land use needs, practices, and goals for guiding land use development as it relates to future transit service implementation. This project identifies local land use needs, prepares individual action plans, addresses implementation tools related to future transit land use integration, works with agencies in assessing how land uses drive transit decisions, and determines how future transit will affect land use.

Additionally, this project closely coordinates with other ongoing I-70 studies and the Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT). This land use study investigates the effects of potential transit on land use in the mountain communities and provides input directly to the I-70 Preliminary Environmental Impact Statement (PEIS), the Context Sensitive Solutions (CSS) project, and the Rocky Mountain Rail Authority (RMRA) rail feasibility study regarding local community interests in future land use, station locations, and transit alignments.

1.2 Process

This transit land use study is a collaborative process that fully engages the communities along the I-70 corridor. The project was divided into four phases to help focus the collaborative process and organize results:

- Phase 1 Community Engagement, Idea Generation, and Land Use Understanding
- Phase 2 Develop Specifications and Strategies
- Phase 3 Plan Formation, Alternative Generation, and Community Tools
- Phase 4 Reports and Feedback

1.2.1 Phase 1 - Community Engagement, Idea Generation, and Land Use Understanding

Phase 1 is the core information gathering step in the project. It includes meeting with local jurisdictions, hosting a transit planning forum, reviewing existing I-70 corridor studies, researching best practices, developing transit station screening guidelines, evaluating land use plans for transit readiness, and identifying potential station locations. As of September 2008, this phase is nearly complete.







Jurisdiction Dialog and Meetings

Central to the collaborative process was the establishment of working groups for each county. The county working groups consisted of representatives from the county and municipal governments, local transit agencies, and some interested citizens. Representatives included public officials, transportation managers and planners, land use planners, public works, and community representatives. The core county working groups along the I-70 corridor included:

- Jefferson County, including Golden
- Clear Creek County, including Idaho Springs, Empire, and Georgetown
- Summit County, including Dillon, Silverthorne, Frisco, and Breckenridge
- Eagle County, including Vail, Avon, Edwards, Eagle, Gypsum, and ECO Transit
- Garfield County, including Glenwood Springs, Carbondale, and Roaring Fork Transportation Authority (RFTA)

Other Coalition members outside the main I-70 corridor were also engaged during the project through Coalition-wide meetings, individual meetings, and regular updates. These include Gilpin County, Grand County, Lake County, Routt County, Pitkin County, and Mesa County.

The county working group meetings were held in April (Round 1), May (Round 2), July (Round 3), and August/September (Round 4). The meetings were an opportunity to listen and pull community values and local needs into the vision for station locations and related alignments. This step in the process was about working with the county working groups and determining what really matters to them in regards to a regional transit system. County working groups informed as to their own local needs helped to establish goals and criteria for a regional transit system and identified potential station locations. Discussions with the local jurisdictions included integration of existing and future transit service into the landscape, including relevant freight services and related requirements. Both agency staff and transit service providers provided their views on local transit needs within the community including ridership sheds, categories of riders, and origin-destination patterns within and between communities, creating an overall picture of transit demand and preferred transit services.

Transit Friendly Planning and Development Forum

The transit forum was held on June 12, 2008 at the Copper Mountain Resort Conference Center and was attended by 120 county, municipal, and citizen representatives (see **Figure 1** for a copy of the announcement and agenda). The purpose of the forum was to bring current transitoriented development ideas to the forefront and explore the possibilities for future implementation.

Speakers at the forum included Allan Zreet (Jacobs), a national transit-oriented development specialist who shared national trends, John Durham (Norris Design), a local land use planner who discussed local mountain development trends and issues, Jennifer Merer (Jacobs), a transit station development specialist who discussed station functions and characteristics, and Arleen

Taniwaki (Arland Land Use Economics), a land use economic planner who shared information on how market forces shape transit-oriented development. The presenters covered a portfolio of best practices for land use development and rural and mountain transit-oriented development and transit station typologies.

Figure 1: Transit Forum Announcement and Agenda





The opportunities, constraints, characteristics, and best practices were shared with the Coalition members. In breakout sessions, forum leaders explored I-70 opportunities, contributed to charettes for particular locations along the corridor, and discussed integration with their communities. Discussion included community values, potential station locations and types, site development or redevelopment opportunities and product mix, walkability, access, parking, bus, pedestrian, and vehicle interfaces.

Review of Existing Studies and Evaluation of Opportunities and Barriers

Previous corridor work was examined as an element of defining the corridor area conditions, feeding the opportunities and constraints analysis, and gathering important information related to community areas. The following documents and plans were reviewed:

- I-70 Mountain Corridor Major Investment Study (MIS)
- I-70 Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement (PEIS)
- Colorado Mag-Lev Study
- Arapahoe and White River National Forest Management Plans
- I-70 Coalition Preferred Alternative
- I-70 Collaborative Effort
- I-70 Context Sensitive Solution Project

The Task 3 Technical Memorandum summarizes the results of this review.

Analysis of Best Practices

The project team brought forward knowledge from past experience in station siting and transit-oriented development, and combined it with research of other US and international transit corridors and input from the transit forum to develop a range of land use best practice strategies. The strategies can be applied by the jurisdictions to potential station locations in their counties in a manner that best serves their communities. It is important to note that the approach is flexible in its parameters since each community is unique and transit-oriented development is not a defined program with a set mix of land uses and densities. Each potential station location will have a unique character, land use mix, and density best determined by each community through their public involvement process. Best practice strategies are a tool box approach and are summarized in the Task 4 Technical Memorandum.

Develop Guidelines

For this step in the process, station location guidelines and screening criteria were developed and reviewed with all the county working groups. The criteria were based on 1) county working group value input, 2) technical siting requirements, 3) consistency with the Context Sensitive Solutions project for the I-70 corridor, 4) I-70 Coalition transit criteria, and 5) the I-70 Collaborative Effort. County working groups are well informed as to their own local needs and







helped establish guidelines and screening criteria for stations on a corridor-wide, regional, and site-specific level.

Collection of Land Use Plans/Identify Barriers and Opportunities

With the assistance of the local jurisdictions, the project team collected and reviewed land use plans, codes, and zoning from the jurisdictions along the I-70 corridor. The project team conducted a focused review of these plans and codes for transportation and transit related information to identify any barriers or opportunities to the development of a viable intermodal transit system through the corridor. The data will be summarized in the Task 7 Technical Memorandum in a matrix table that will list the member jurisdictions and easily summarize key attributes from the data review such as:

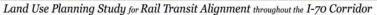
- Date of plan or code
- Summarize planning area
- Goals/policies in regard to land use
- Goals/policies in regard to growth and urban boundaries
- Goals/policies with regard to transportation (transit)
- Existing implementation tools/strategies (such as growth boundaries, transfer development rights)
- Mixed use zoning regulations
- Downtown zoning regulations (or higher density stuff)
- Transit-related zoning regulations

Station Site Identification

Potential transit station locations were determined by the county working groups during the Round 2 and 3 monthly meetings as well as, from input received during the transit forum breakout sessions. Initially, the groups considered any and all locations that served both passengers and light freight throughout the corridor. Included in the discussions were preliminary considerations of potential staging and maintenance facility sites for the transit system.

The station guidelines and criteria developed by the project team and working groups first served as a corridor-level overview of potential station locations. Potential station locations were explored further at a county-level, considering locations at the towns and resorts along the corridor. For county-level locations in which jurisdictions had more information, specific sites were identified for consideration. As the list of potential sites grew, the discussion focused back up to the county- and corridor-level to evaluate how the locations met guidelines and criteria at all three levels. Some potential locations were dropped through this process. The result is the Task 8 Technical Memorandum with a corridor map of potential station locations, including a prioritization of sites in areas where there are multiple potential locations.







1.2.2 Phase 2 - Develop Specifications and Strategies

Phase 2 provides more detailed specifications for transit stations and provides strategies and action plans for communities to consider. As of September 2008, this phase is currently in process.

Develop Technical Specifications for Transit Centers

The guidelines and criteria previously developed for station locations were used as a basis for developing more specific technical specifications for transit center locations. The specifications provide a much more detailed look at siting and even how a transit center might be laid out, including spacing and physical dimensions.

Specifications based on operational characteristics were developed and helped define physical size and infrastructure needs. The specifications do not define the transit center layout, but provide the tools necessary to plan them in the future as operational characteristics are developed and approved. To be compatible with ongoing planning processes, some technical specifications were developed in the form of criteria to allow for important trade-offs of transit center elements. Technical specifications and criteria were developed separately for maintenance facilities and for freight sites. As a result, these facilities could be sited at different locations or concurrent with or adjacent to passenger station sties.

Once the preferred station sites were selected, three photo-based visual simulations were developed. Each illustrates one proposed station where visual impacts are particularly important. A photo of the site was used as the background for the visual simulation. Information for these visual simulations included applicable data collected from CDOT, municipalities and stakeholders. The visual simulations included general terms the design intent for the station, streetscape and park and ride, if applicable.

Strategy Development and Action Plans

At this step in the process, the project moved toward strategies to overcome the barriers identified in earlier steps. As the county working groups weighed in on obstacles to transit success, strategizes for moving forward beyond these obstacles were developed. The project team worked closely with agencies to develop action plans that reflect the values that local communities and agencies earlier expressed, and that coincide with the overriding goals and objectives developed through the Coalition. This is a critical "coming together" of community values, interests and goals into initial steps for action in each community. The project team continued a strong dialogue with the core communities and garner input and support along the way from the off-corridor groups.

1.2.3 Phase 3 - Plan Formation, Alternative Generation, and Community Tools

Phase 3 provided county working groups with land use and zoning recommendations to overcome barriers and facilitate development of a transit system along the corridor, and potential alignment alternatives were considered. As of September 2008, this phase is currently in process.







Land Use and Zoning Language Recommendations

Where necessary, the project team will provide local jurisdictions with recommendations for new language within existing land use development and planning and zoning codes to permit transit facilities, including transit oriented development for transit stations within their planning and land use boundaries.

It was the goal of this study to not only converse with local jurisdictions about future station locations and changing land use, but to prepare for the implementation of a coordinated station and land use plan. Local jurisdictions were interested in reviewing their land use regulations, design guidelines, or zoning codes to ensure the implementation of transit facilities or transit oriented development at the anticipated sites.

Develop Potential Transit Alignments

The project team is working in conjunction with the county working groups, USFS, and other land owners to develop preliminary options for transit alignments that essentially "connects the dots" for station locations.

This task was important in determining other possible alignment scenarios and required close coordination with the USFS and other land owners to assess the possibilities. This step explored the potential desire of the USFS and other land owners to assist with and work in conjunction with future transportation options. Schematic alignment exhibits were developed and a cursory analysis of the possible off-alignment corridors conducted. Mapping from USFS was used to develop the schematic corridors. These were evaluated at a high level and assessed for their relationship to existing and future destinations, effect on natural resources, and impacts to land use.

1.2.4 Phase 4 – Reports and Feedback

For this final phase, the project team prepared and presented a Draft Report to the I-70 Coalition and other stakeholders in the corridor. This Draft Report included maps of proposed alignments through the corridor, land use and development constraints, recommended remedies, potential for transit-oriented development, and transit station locations. The project team gathered the feedback and comments from the Coalition and other stakeholders in the corridor on the Draft Report and incorporated this input into the Final Report. The conclusion of this task ended the project and left the Coalition with an important tool that identifies potential station locations and alignments, reflects the local community values and land use needs, helps to guide policy in the corridor, and will provide input to other studies and agencies.

1.3 Schedule

A project schedule was developed for the study outlining the above-mentioned phases and steps. **Figure 2** depicts the project schedule.





major task schedule -70 COA|Ition Land Use Planning Study for Rail Transit Alignment throughout the 1-70 Corridor

Figure 2: Project Schedule





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2.0 Preferences for Transit Service and Station Locations

The second round of meetings was held with the county working groups the week of May 5, 2008. The purpose of the meetings was to solicit input on goals and criteria for transit access and stations locations and to learn community preferences for transit service levels, freight service levels, and station locations. Input on goals and criteria are summarized in the Task 5 Guidelines and Criteria Technical Memorandum. Preferences for service levels are summarized below for Jefferson County, Clear Creek County, Summit County, Eagle County, and Garfield County.

Jefferson County Working Group Preferences

Transit Service Freight Service	Station Locations
Participants thought a regional transit system would serve Golden and rural county residents who work in the Denver area. The system would also serve the same residents who travel into the mountain areas for recreation. Some participants also believed it was important to serve special needs populations such as seniors and lower income. Representatives from Jefferson County identified a concern about the type of frei service that would be accommodated by the regional transit syste Light freight service daily consumables would be preferable to heavy freight. They would be opposed to heavy freight that included shipments of hazardous waste and the look and feel of a industrial freight service for the system should clearly defined prior acceptance by the county.	unincorporated Jefferson County indicated a desire to minimize the number of stations in the county to two locations. Representatives from Golden indicated a preference for a location in their town. Station preferences included: • East Terminus Project Area • I-70 Hogback Area • I-70/US 6 Interchange Area • Washington St/SH 58 • El Rancho Meeting attendees discouraged a station at Genesee.



Clear Creek County Working Group Preferences

Transit Service	Freight Service	Station Locations
Most believed that regular service to and from Denver would be important. Attracting people from Denver to spend the day meets the community's desire for tourist attractions. Equally important was service for locals who work in Denver. The County's close proximity to Denver provides more opportunities for regular interaction between the towns and Denver. Local service between the towns was also important, particularly for workers traveling to the Henderson Mine.	The group thought that freight service would be an important component to the transit system. Many businesses rely on daily deliveries for consumables. There as also a desire to see truck traffic on Floyd Hill reduced where truck accidents are common.	Some participants mentioned that a station at Floyd Hill would serve the growing residential community there. There are also plans and interest to develop mixed land uses to provide services to nearby residents. Most participants agreed that a station would be needed at Idaho Springs. This would capitalize on the historic transportation connections when the town originally developed as a mining center. Connections to Central City and Blackhawk could also be made. Both Empire and Georgetown locations have some advantages; Georgetown with its residential and historical base and Empire with availability of land and proximity to the Henderson Mine. Most agreed that only one station is this area would be likely and that additional planning would be necessary to select the optimal location. None of the attendees encouraged a station location at Silver Plume. Most agreed that serving the Loveland Ski Area would be important. Station preferences included: Floyd Hill (top) Idaho Springs Ball Fields area Argo Mill area Downtown, parking lot south of Miner Street HS Football Field USFS Offices area Empire Junction Flats Georgetown Lakeside Loveland Ski Area



Table 3: Summit County Working Group Preferences

Transit Service	Freight Service	Station Locations
The group noted that the most important user group to accommodate would be tourists who come up from Denver for the day or multiple days (more frequent service in the mornings and evenings). Secondarily would be locals traveling to Denver or other mountain communities. Also there were some workers traveling from Denver to Summit County to work, but most came from surrounding communities.	Freight service was considered important to local businesses. Many trucks come from Denver daily (UPS, FedEx, Safeway, etc.) and minimizing local truck traffic (and associated accidents) from I-70 was a priority. Locations for offloading freight and distribution would need to be identified. Silverthorne could be a potential location because of its desire to maintain a commercial hub.	Summit County does not have a linear relationship to I-70 as the other mountain communities do. Therefore, there are more options for station locations. Most participants agreed that a station in the Silverthorne/Dillon area should be considered since Silverthorne is one of the few locations where there is some availability of land for development or redevelopment. The town also has redevelopment plans for a commercial/retail hub just north of I-70. Dillon also has a redevelopment area just south of I-70 that could accommodate a station location. Land availability and growth restrictions were some of the biggest obstacles identified for station locations in Breckenridge and Frisco. Station preferences included: Keystone Keystone Reckenridge City Market area Downtown (Gondola Lot) Block 11 Stan Miller property (north Breckenridge) Dillon Silverthorne I-70 Interchange/outlet mall area Lake Hill Location generally between I-70 and Lake Dillon and between Frisco and Silverthorne. Frisco Best Western area Copper Mountain



Table 4: Eagle County Working Group Preferences

Transit Service	Freight Service	Station Locations			
Participants identified two primary users of the system: • Local work force • Tourists/second home owners Most believed providing service levels to accommodate people from Eagle County working in Denver or from Denver to Eagle County would not be as important. Local service levels would need to accommodate morning and evening work commuters. Providing service levels that accommodate tourists would be important to help the county leverage economic benefits. This includes winter time skier visits and summer time recreational/shopping visits. This service level would likely consist of people coming up in the morning, spending the day, and returning in the evening.	Most agreed that accommodating freight service was important. Many local businesses rely on daily truck shipments, both to and from Denver. Eagle County Airport is already developing as an industrial center. Likely need another location at east end of county for local distribution.	Attendees desired transit connections at each of the local population/commercial centers, including: • Vail • Avon • Edwards • Eagle (town) • Eagle Airport • Gypsum Locations for regional transit stations would need to relate to the proposed Intermountain Connection (IMC) system which would serve the same communities listed above. Therefore, it was recognized that the actual number of connections to a regional transit system might be less and might include: • Eagle County Airport • Somewhere in the middle (Edwards/Walcott?) • Avon/Vail Preferences would be for stations to be off the mainline and served by sidings.			



Table 5: Garfield County Working Group Preferences

Transit Service	Freight Service	Station Locations			
A regional transit system would likely serve tourists from the Front Range traveling to the Roaring Fork Valley for recreation opportunities. Also service should consider traffic/people coming into the Roaring Fork Valley from west I-70 and the communities of New Castle, Silt, and Rifle. There are many workers who travel this way to jobs up valley. The transit system should consider how it serves both east and west directions. Garfield County residents would value a transit connection from the county to the Denver International Airport. Currently residents and visitors use both the Eagle County and Grand Junction airports to access the county, but there are challenges with each (distance, connections, flight availability, etc). Community members are interested in both local and regional transit service, such as skip service.	Attendees believed that it would be important for a regional transit system to provide light freight service to remove truck traffic from I-70. Currently there is a UPS/Fedex shipping center at Cattle Creek near Carbondale. There is also a rail switching yard in Glenwood Springs that could be used as a distribution center. Larger freight service is not likely to be served by the regional transit system.	Attendees noted that in determining potential station locations, consideration will have to be given to alignment alternatives. For example, if the alignment passes through the Glenwood Canyon, the logical first station in the county would be in Glenwood Springs. This station would then be served by a local transit system up valley to Carbondale and Aspen. However, if the alignment passes over Cottonwood Pass, then the first potential station might include Carbondale and on to Glenwood Springs. In this case, the regional system could be used to provide local transit between Carbondale and Glenwood. Irrespective of alignment alternatives, attendees agreed that a station in Glenwood Springs would be required. Station preferences included: • Glenwood Springs • Downtown Wye area • West Glenwood RFTA PnR • Roaring Fork Market Place • Cattle Creek/CMC US 82 Intersection Area • Carbondale • RFTA PnR • Town Hall • Town Hall • Catherine's Store			



Attachments

County Working Groups Round 1 and 2 Meeting Summaries

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